

Response-Level Emergency Communications Evaluation Form

Instructions: Counties and county-equivalents can use this Response-Level Communications Form to fulfill the performance criteria for Goal 2 assessment. Counties can also complete a web-based version of this form and submit it to their Statewide Interoperability Coordinator at <https://franz.spawar.navy.mil> (Response-Level Communication Tool). This form will take approximately one hour to complete.

Background Information

State:
County:
Event Type (Planned event, Exercise, Real-world incident):
Event Name:
Event Date:
Event Address:
Which other counties, if any, had significant participation in the event?
List total number of agencies in the incident, planned event, or exercise: Federal: _____ State: _____ Local: _____ Non-governmental: _____
List all Federal, State, local, or tribal agencies involved in the incident, planned event, or exercise:
Briefly describe the incident, planned event, or exercise:
Indicate all communications technologies used in the incident, planned event, or exercise covered by this evaluation: __Swap Radios __Gateways __Shared Channels __Proprietary __Shared System __Standards-Based Shared System __Broadband __Cellular __Mobile __Other _____

Incident Selection Guidance

Use this checklist to decide if the incident, planned event, or exercise that you are considering is suitable for the demonstration of response-level emergency communications during routine events. To assure an accurate evaluation, please answer all questions carefully. Ideally, all the items should be marked “Yes.” If not, consider whether other incidents, planned events, or exercises would be more suitable. Generally, the more “Yes” answers that you have, the more suitable the incident, planned event, or exercise is for determining if response-level emergency communications was demonstrated.

Guidelines	Yes ✓	No ✓
Incident Scope & Scale		
Did the response involve multiple agencies and emergency response disciplines within one hour of the incident, planned event, or exercise?	Yes	No
Was the incident, planned event, or exercise managed under a National Incident Management System (NIMS)-compliant Incident Command System (ICS)?	Yes	No
Does sufficient documentation exist to provide for independent validation and verification of the adequacy of response-level emergency communications?	Yes	No

Supporting Evaluation Criteria

Once a suitable incident, exercise, or planned event is selected for evaluation and a primary demonstration of response-level emergency communications is achieved, particular criteria can be examined. These criteria dive into aspects of emergency response that affect communications interoperability: common policies and procedures, responder roles and responsibilities, and quality and continuity. Most are qualitative, asking for a judgment call on how well, or how often, something occurred. Others just seek to determine whether or not something happened.

A judgment call is necessary in choosing between “Some of the time” or “Most of the time.” Without attempting to set an impractical degree of accuracy, consider “Half of the time” as the dividing line between those two options. If something did happen, but happened less than half of the time, choose “Some.” If it happened more frequently, but not always, choose “Most.”

Following each criteria, you have an opportunity to provide additional information supporting your responses. Please explain if there were, or still are, broader circumstances that influenced the results. Consider identifying success factors and recommendations that led to your conclusions.

There are 32 supporting evaluation questions totaling 100 points. By assigning points to many of the Supporting Evaluation Criterion, a total can be created that provides a snapshot of response-level emergency communications demonstration. Indented questions are dependent upon responses to the proceeding question.

Criteria

Common Policies & Procedures

Evaluation Criteria #1

Interagency communications policies and procedures were common or consistent amongst all responding agencies.

1.1 Did policies and procedures exist for interagency communications between the involved jurisdictions, agencies, and disciplines?	N/A (none exist)	In some cases	-	In most cases	In all needed cases
1.2 Were they written?	N/A (none exist)	In some cases	-	In most cases	In all needed cases

SUCCESS FACTORS (OPTIONAL)

CHALLENGES (OPTIONAL)

RECOMMENDATIONS (OPTIONAL)

Evaluation Criteria #2

Established interagency communications policies and procedures were followed throughout the incident, planned event, or exercise.

2.1 Were established interagency communications policies and procedures followed throughout the incident, planned event, or exercise?	N/A (none exist)	None of the time	Some of the time	Most of the time	All of the time
2.2 Did established policies and procedures exist between responding agencies for request, activation, accountability, deactivation, and problem resolution of deployable interagency communications resources, such as mobile communications centers, gateways, and radio caches?	N/A (none exist)	-	In some cases	In most cases	In all needed cases
2.3 If so, were they followed? [Information only]	None were	Some were	Most were	All were / N/A (none needed)	-

SUCCESS FACTORS (OPTIONAL)

CHALLENGES (OPTIONAL)

RECOMMENDATIONS (OPTIONAL)

Evaluation Criteria #3

Interagency communications policies and procedures across all responding agencies were consistent with NIMS.

3.1 Were interagency communications policies and procedures across responding agencies consistent with NIMS?	N/A (none exist)	-	Some were	Most were	All were
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SUCCESS FACTORS (OPTIONAL)

CHALLENGES (OPTIONAL)

RECOMMENDATIONS (OPTIONAL)

Evaluation Criteria #4

A priority order for use of interagency communications resources was followed as established in standard operation procedures or plans, such as the Tactical Interoperable Communications Plan (TICP).

4.1 Does a priority order exist for use of interagency communications resources (e.g., life safety before property protection)?	No	-	-	Yes	-
4.2 Was this prioritization of communications resource use followed?	None of the time	Some of the time	Most of the time	All of the time / N/A (none needed)	-

SUCCESS FACTORS (OPTIONAL)

CHALLENGES (OPTIONAL)

RECOMMENDATIONS (OPTIONAL)

Evaluation Criteria #5

A primary interagency operations talk path was clearly established by procedure or communicated to responders early in the incident, planned event, or exercise.

5.1 Was a primary interagency communications talk path clearly established by procedures used during the incident, planned event, or exercise?	No	-	-	-	Yes
5.2 If not, was such a talk path established ad hoc and communicated to responders early in the incident, planned event, or exercise?	No	-	-	Yes	-

SUCCESS FACTORS (OPTIONAL)

CHALLENGES (OPTIONAL)

RECOMMENDATIONS (OPTIONAL)

Evaluation Criteria #6

Common terminology and plain language were used in all interagency communications.

6.1 Was plain language used throughout the incident, planned event, or exercise?	None of the time	Some of the time	-	Most of the time	All of the time
6.2 Did any communications problems arise amongst the primary operational leadership due to a lack of common terminology?	Yes	-	-	-	No
6.3 Did any communications problems arise amongst other response-level emergency personnel during the incident, planned event, or exercise due to a lack of common terminology?	Yes	-	-	-	No

SUCCESS FACTORS (OPTIONAL)

CHALLENGES (OPTIONAL)

RECOMMENDATIONS (OPTIONAL)

Evaluation Criteria #7

Clear unit identification procedures were used.

7.1 Were clear unit identification procedures used amongst the primary operational leadership?	None of the time	-	Some of the time	Most of the time	All of the time
7.2 Were clear unit identification procedures used amongst other response-level emergency personnel throughout the incident, planned event, or exercise?	None of the time	-	Some of the time	Most of the time	All of the time

SUCCESS FACTORS (OPTIONAL)**CHALLENGES (OPTIONAL)****RECOMENDATIONS (OPTIONAL)****Evaluation Criteria #8**

Common channel names were used for designated interoperability channels.

8.1 Were common names used by all responding agencies for interagency communications channels?	None of the time	Some of the time	Most of the time	All of the time / N/A (no such channels used)	-
8.2 Were standard names as identified in the National Interoperability Field Operations Guide (NIFOG) used for Federal Communications Commission (FCC)-designated interoperability channels?	None of the time	Some of the time	Most of the time	All of the time / N/A (no such channels used)	-

SUCCESS FACTORS (OPTIONAL)**CHALLENGES (OPTIONAL)****RECOMENDATIONS (OPTIONAL)****Responder Roles & Responsibilities****Evaluation Criteria #9**

A single individual was designated with Operations Section Chief responsibilities.

9.1 Did a single individual carry out the Operations Section Chief responsibilities in each operational period?	No	-	-	-	Yes
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SUCCESS FACTORS (OPTIONAL)**CHALLENGES (OPTIONAL)****RECOMENDATIONS (OPTIONAL)**

Evaluation Criteria #10

Span of control was maintained amongst the primary operational leadership: the Operations Section Chief and first-level subordinates.

10.1 Did the Operations Section Chief directly manage more than seven subordinates at any time?	Yes	-	-	-	No
10.2 Did first-level subordinates to the Operations Section Chief directly manage more than seven subordinates at any time?	In all cases	In most cases	In some cases	In no cases	-

SUCCESS FACTORS (OPTIONAL)

CHALLENGES (OPTIONAL)

RECOMENDATIONS (OPTIONAL)

Evaluation Criteria #11

Communications Unit Leader (COML) roles and responsibilities were carried out by the IC/UC or designee.

- Necessary communications resources were effectively ordered using documented procedures.gggg
- A communications plan was established by procedure or developed early in the incident, planned event, or exercise.

11.1 Was the ICS COML position specifically filled during the incident, planned event, or exercise?	No	-	-	-	Yes
11.2 Were COML roles and responsibilities carried out, either by the Incident Commander (or Unified Command), the COML, or another designee?	None were	-	Some were	Most were	All were
11.3 Who by position or function carried out the responsibilities? [Narrative response]					
11.4 Were necessary communications resources effectively ordered?	None were	Some were	Most were	All were / N/A (none needed)	-
11.5 Were they ordered using documented procedures?	None were	Some were	Most were	All were / N/A (none needed)	
11.6 Was a communications plan established by procedure or developed early in the incident, planned event, or exercise?	No	-	-	-	Yes
11.7 Did the communications plan meet the communications needs of the primary operational leadership? [Information only]	Yes/No				

SUCCESS FACTORS (OPTIONAL)

CHALLENGES (OPTIONAL)

RECOMENDATIONS (OPTIONAL)

Quality & Continuity

Evaluation Criteria #12

No more than one out of 10 transmissions was repeated amongst the primary operational leadership due to failure of initial communications attempts.

12.1 Were more than one out of every 10 transmissions repeated due to failure of initial communications attempts amongst the primary operational leadership?

Yes - - - No

SUCCESS FACTORS (OPTIONAL)

CHALLENGES (OPTIONAL)

RECOMENDATIONS (OPTIONAL)

Evaluation Criteria #13

Upon failure or overload of any primary communications mode, a back-up was provided.

13.1 Was a back-up resource available for communications amongst the primary operational leadership in case of failure of the primary mode?

No - - - Yes

13.2 Did the primary mode fail during the incident, planned event, or exercise at any time? [Information only]

Yes/No

13.3 If so, was a back-up effectively provided?

No - - Yes -

SUCCESS FACTORS (OPTIONAL)

CHALLENGES (OPTIONAL)

RECOMENDATIONS (OPTIONAL)

Evaluation Criteria #14

Primary operational leadership communicated adequately to manage resources and make timely decisions during the incident, planned event, or exercise.

14.1 Overall, was the primary operational leadership able to communicate adequately to manage resources during the incident, planned event, or exercise?

None of the time - Some of the time Most of the time All of the time

SUCCESS FACTORS (OPTIONAL)

CHALLENGES (OPTIONAL)

RECOMENDATIONS (OPTIONAL)